



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/889,497	07/18/2001	Shu Yamaguchi		4197

2292 7590 04/23/2003
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH
PO BOX 747
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747

EXAMINER
DOUYON, LORNA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1751	6

DATE MAILED: 04/23/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/889,497	YAMAGUCHI ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Lorna M. Douyon	1751	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 July 2001.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 - 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 - 6) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
 - 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 - 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4-5.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

Art Unit: 1751

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 1751

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kubota et al (US Patent No. 6,376,453), hereinafter “Kubota”.

Kubota teaches detergent particles having a bulk density in the range from 620-680 g/liter, an average particle size from 230-270 μm , the particles obtained by classifying and collecting particles sandwiched between a 125 μm -sieve opening and a 180 μm -sieve opening, the particles comprising nonionic surfactant as the sole surfactant or nonionic and anionic surfactant in a 1:1 weight ratio, the particle having a sixty-sec. dissolution rate in the range from 95-99% (see Examples 1-5 under cols 26-27). Even though Kubota does not explicitly disclose the mass base frequency or the recited formula, it would be inherent in the detergent particles of Kubota to satisfy the recited formula because same ingredients, proportions, overlapping bulk density and dissolution rate have been utilized. Hence, Kubota anticipates the claims.

Art Unit: 1751

5. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Dijk et al.(WO 94/02573), hereinafter “Van Dijk”.

Van Dijk teaches a high active granular detergent composition with a bulk density of at least 600 g/l and having less than 10% by weight of particles less than 150 microns and less than 10% by weight of particles greater than 1700 microns, to which is post-added additional ingredients which increases the bulk density of the finished product while maintaining good dispensing and dissolution properties (see abstract). The granular detergent particles are made by any suitable process and fines and oversize particles are removed, for example, on a sieve (see page 5, lines 20-24). The composition comprises anionic/nonionic blend wherein the nonionic and anionic surfactant have a ratio of from about 0.01:1 to about 1:1 (see page 13, lines 19-24). The finished composition comprises from 5% to 25% by weight of anionic surfactant (see page 26, line 8). In Example 1, Van Dijk teaches the preparation of a detergent composition wherein a base powder comprising anionic surfactant was sieved through a Tyler sieve mesh 10 to remove the course fraction (>1700 microns), and on a Tyler sieve mesh 65 in order to remove the fines (<212 microns), and to which is added nonionic surfactant, resulting in detergent composition having a bulk density of 1050 g/l and an average particle size of about 400 microns (see entire pages 27-28). Van Dijk, however, fails to disclose the mass base frequency and dissolving rate which satisfies the recited formula.

Considering the detergent particles of Van Dijk having good dissolution properties, and considering the particles having overlapping nonionic/anionic blend ratio, bulk density and particle

Art Unit: 1751

sizes, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to reasonably expect the properties of the detergent particles of Van Dijk to satisfy the recited formula because same ingredients with overlapping proportions, bulk density and particle sizes have been utilized.

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicants' disclosure. The references are considered cumulative to or less material than those discussed above.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lorna M. Douyon whose telephone number is (703) 305-3773. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays-Fridays from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yogendra Gupta, can be reached on (703) 308-4708. The fax phone number for this Technology Center is:

(703) 872-9311 - for Official After Final faxes
(703) 872-9310 - for all other Official faxes.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Technology Center receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

April 21, 2003

Lorna M. Douyon
Lorna M. Douyon
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1751